

REMARKS

Claims 1-11, 18, 19, 21, 22 and 42-47 are now presented for examination. Claims 43 and 46 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 1-3, 7-11, 18, 22, 42 and 45 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention, in terms which distinguish over the art of record. Claims 1, 8, 18, 19, 21, 22, 42 and 45 are the only independent claims.

Claims 1-11, 18, 19, 21, 22, 42, 44, 45 and 47 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application 9-282263 (Iijima et al.). With regard to the claims as currently amended, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 1 as currently amended is directed to information processing apparatus in which a communication controller is configured to receive a read command from an external device. The read command specifies a memory address where data to be read out are stored. A memory stores information about a device mountable on the information processing apparatus but is not mounted thereon in a memory area from which the external device can read out the information about a device by using the read command. The device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus but is not mounted has an attachable part through which that device is attached to the information processing apparatus and a function assist part that assists a function of the information processing apparatus.

Independent Claim 18 as currently amended and pending Claim 21 are directed to a method of controlling an information processing apparatus. According to the method and storage medium control program, in a storage step, information is stored about a device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus but is not mounted thereon in a memory area that is

accessible by an external device by using a read command that specifies a memory address where the information about a device to be read out. In a communication control step a read command is received from the external device and, in a transmission step, the information about the device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus but is not mounted thereon held in a memory area is transmitted in accordance with the read command from the external device. The device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus but is not mounted thereon has an attachable part through which the device is attached to the information processing apparatus and a function assist part that assists a function of the information processing apparatus.

Independent Claim 42 as currently amended is directed to information processing apparatus in which a memory is configured to store information about a device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus but is not mounted thereon and a communication unit is configured to send the stored information to an external device. The device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus but is not mounted thereon has an attachable part through which that device is attached to the information processing apparatus and a function assist part that assists a function of the information processing apparatus.

In Applicants' view, Iijima et al. discloses an arrangement in which plural electronic devices are connected by a communications control bus and communicate control signals and information signals with each other. At least device model information is stored in a memory as an ID unique to the electronic device.

According to the invention defined in Claims 1, 18, 21 and 42 information stored in a memory indicates a device that is mountable on an information processing apparatus but is not mounted on the information processing apparatus. The device mountable on an information

processing apparatus but not mounted has a function assist part that assists a function of the information processing apparatus. Advantageously, a user may receive information about devices that are mountable to an information processing apparatus and is able to specify a device which satisfies desired function in an environment where plural devices are connected.

Iijima et al. may teach a system in which a PC inquires of the other devices of a system about node unique IDs and creates a correspondence table of node ids and node unique ids based on the responses to the inquiries. A correspondence table of node ids and device categories (e.g., VTR, CAM) is then created from further PC inquiries. The PC stores the two correspondence tables and displays a system configuration. When a device is added to the system, new information of the added node obtained by inquiry is stored.

It is a feature of Claims 1, 18, 21 and 42 that a memory stores information which indicates a device that is mountable on an information processing apparatus (e.g., ink jet printer) but is not mounted thereon. It is a further feature of Claims 1, 18, 21 and 42 that the device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus but not mounted thereon has a function assist part (e.g., a part for supplying color ink, a part for supplying A4 size paper) adapted to assist a function (printing) of the information processing system. Iijima et al. discloses connecting a node for a CAM or VTR to a PC. The CAM or VTR, however, are connected to the PC but are not "mountable on the information processing apparatus (PC) but are not mounted on the information processing apparatus" as in Claims 1, 18, 21 and 42. The CAM or VTR are only listed in a table if previously or presently connected to the PC. Further, the CAM or VTR perform their own functions but do not assist functions of the PC. Accordingly, it is not seen that Iijama et al.'s CAM or VTR connected to a PC in any manner teaches or suggests the features of

Claims 1, 18, 21 and 42. It is therefore believed that Claims 1, 18, 21 and 42 are completely distinguished from Iijima et al. and are allowable.

Independent Claim 8 as currently amended is directed to information processing apparatus in which a communication controller is configured to send a read command to an external device which read command specifies a memory address where data to be read out is stored. An acquisition unit is configured to acquire information about a device that is mountable on the external device but is not mounted thereon from a memory area of the external device by using the read command. A display control unit is configured to control a display based on the information acquired by the acquisition unit. The device that is mountable on the external device but is not mounted thereon has an attachable part through which that device is attached to the external device and a function assist part that assists a function of the external device.

Pending independent Claim 19 and independent Claim 22 as currently amended are directed to a method and a storage medium program of controlling an information processing apparatus. According to the method and storage medium program, in a communication control step, a read command is sent to an external device which read command specifies a memory address where data to be read out are stored. In an acquisition step, information about a device that is mountable on the external device but is not mounted thereon is acquired from a memory area of the external device by using the read command. In a display control step, a display based upon the information acquired in the acquisition step is controlled. The device that is mountable on the external device but is not mounted thereon has an attachable part through which the device is attached to the external device and a function assist part that assists a function of the external device.

Pending independent Claim 45 is directed to a method of controlling an information processing apparatus that communicates with an external device. According to the method, in an acquisition step, information about a device that is mountable on the external device but is not mounted thereon is acquired. In a display control step, a display based upon the information acquired in the acquisition step is controlled. The device that is mountable on the external device but is not mounted thereon has an attachable part through which the device is attached to the external device and a function assist part that assists a function of the external device.

In accordance with the invention of Claims 8, 19, 22 and 45, an information processing apparatus acquires information from an external device that indicates a device mountable on the external device (e.g., an ink jet printer) but not mounted thereon and the device that is mountable but not mounted includes a function assist part (e.g., a part that supplies color ink or A4 size paper) for assisting a function of the external device (ink jet printer). As discussed with respect to Claims 1, 18, 21 and 42, Iijima et al. only teaches connecting a node such as a CAM or VTR to a PC so that the CAM or VTR node can perform its own function and storing information about the CAM and VTR only if it has been connected to the PC but fails to teach or suggest the feature of acquiring information about a device that is mountable on an external device to an information processing apparatus but not mounted on the external device or the feature of the mountable but not mounted device having a function assist part for assisting a function of the external device. Accordingly, it is not seen that Iijima et al. in any manner teaches the features of Claims 8, 19, 22 and 45 as currently amended.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references

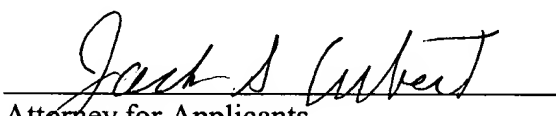
against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable and reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' attorney, Daniel S. Glueck, may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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